

**EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH**

Definitions

Foster youth means a child who has been removed from his/her home pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 309, is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602, or has been removed from his/her home and is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602 or is a nonminor who is under the transition jurisdiction of a juvenile court, as described in Welfare and Institutions Code 450, and satisfies the criteria specified in Education Code 42238.01. (Education Code 42238.01, 48853.5)

Person holding the *right to make educational decisions* means a responsible adult appointed by a court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 361 or 727.

*School of origin* means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which he/she was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which he/she was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the preceding 15 months and with which the youth is connected, the district liaison for foster youth shall determine, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, and in the best interest of the foster youth, which school is the school of origin. (Education Code 48853.5)

*Best interest* means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, educational stability, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress, and the foster youth's access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to district students. (Education Code 48853)

**District Liaison**

The Superintendent or designee designates the following position as the district liaison for foster youth: (Education Code 48853.5)

Director, Student Support OR Homeless/Foster Youth Liaison  
Saugus Union School District  
24930 Ave Stanford  
(661) 294-5300

(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)

The liaison for foster youth shall:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of students in foster care (Education Code 48853.5)

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2. Ensure proper transfer of credits, records, and grades when students in foster care transfer from one school to another or from one district to another (Education Code 48645.5, 48853.5)

When a student in foster care is enrolling in a district school, the liaison shall contact the school last attended by the student to obtain, within two business days, all academic and other records. When a foster youth is transferring to a new school, the liaison shall provide the student's records to the new school within two business days of receiving the new school's request. (Education Code 48853.5)

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

*(cf. 6146.3 - Reciprocity of Academic Credit)*

3. When required by law, notify the foster youth's attorney and the representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency when the foster youth is undergoing any expulsion or other disciplinary proceeding, including a manifestation determination prior to a change in the foster youth's placement, when he/she is a student with a disability. (Education Code 48853.5, 48911, 48915.5, 48918.1)

*(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)*

*(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))*

*(cf. 6159.4 - Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)*

4. As needed, make appropriate referrals to ensure that students in foster care receive necessary special education services and services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973

*(cf. 6164.4 - Identification and Evaluation of Individuals for Special Education)*

*(cf. 6164.6 - Identification and Education Under Section 504)*

5. As needed, ensure that students in foster care receive appropriate school-based services, such as counseling and health services, supplemental instruction, and after-school services

*(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)*

*(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)*

*(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)*

*(cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program)*

*(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)*

*(cf. 6177 - Summer Learning Programs)*

*(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)*

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6. Develop protocols and procedures for creating awareness for district staff, including principals, school registrars, and attendance clerks, of the requirements for the proper enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth

*(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)*

*(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)*

*(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)*

7. Collaborate with the county office of education, county placing agency, county child welfare agency, county probation department, juvenile court, and other appropriate agencies to help coordinate services for the district's foster youth

*(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)*

*(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)*

8. Monitor the educational progress of foster youth and provide reports to the Superintendent or designee and the Governing Board based on indicators identified in the district's local control and accountability plan

*(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)*

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly monitor the caseload of the liaison, as well as his/her additional duties outside of the foster youth program, to determine whether adequate time and resources are available to meet the needs of foster youth in the district.

**Enrollment**

A student placed in a licensed children's institution or foster family home within the district shall attend programs operated by the district unless one of the following circumstances applies: (Education Code 48853, 48853.5)

1. The student has an individualized education program requiring placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency or in another local educational agency.

*(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)*

*(cf. 6159.2 - Nonpublic Nonsectarian School and Agency Services for Special Education)*

2. The parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student determines that it is in the best interest of the student to be placed in another educational and submits a written statement to the district indicating that determination and that he/she is aware of the following:

- a. The student has a right to attend a regular public school in the least restrictive environment.

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- b. The alternate educational program is a special education program, if applicable.
- c. The decision to unilaterally remove the student from the district school and to place him/her in an alternate education program may not be financed by the district.
- d. Any attempt to seek reimbursement for the alternate education program may be at the expense of the parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student.

*(cf. 5116.1 - Intradistrict Open Enrollment)*

*(cf. 5117 - Interdistrict Attendance)*

*(cf. 6159.3 - Appointment of Surrogate Parent for Special Education Students)*

- 3. At the initial placement or any subsequent change in placement, the student exercises his/her right to continue in his/her school of origin, as defined above.
  - a. The student may continue in the school of origin for the duration of the court's jurisdiction.
  - b. If the court's jurisdiction over a grade K-8 student is terminated prior to the end of a school year, the student may continue in his/her school of origin for the remainder of the school year.
  - c. If the court's jurisdiction is terminated while the student is in high school, the student may continue in his/her school of origin until he/she graduates.
  - d. If the student is transitioning between school grade levels, he/she shall be allowed to continue in the district of origin in the same attendance area to provide him/her the benefit of matriculating with his/her peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts. A student who is transitioning to a middle school or high school shall be allowed to enroll in the school designated for matriculation in another school district.

The district liaison may, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, recommend that the youth's right to attend the school of origin be waived and he/she be enrolled in any school that students living in the attendance area in which the foster youth resides are eligible to attend. All decisions shall be made in accordance with the foster youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

Prior to making any recommendation to move a foster youth from his/her school of origin, the liaison shall provide the youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth with a written explanation of the basis for the recommendation and how this recommendation serves the youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

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The role of the liaison shall be advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of the school of origin. (Education Code 48853.5)

If the liaison, in consultation with the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, agree that the best interests of the youth would be served by his/her transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the principal or designee of the new school shall immediately enroll the foster youth. The foster youth shall be immediately enrolled even if he/she: (Education Code 48853.5)

1. Has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or monies due to the school last attended

*(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)*

2. Does not have clothing normally required by the school, such as school uniforms

*(cf. 5132 - Dress and Grooming)*

3. Is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, and medical records, including, but not limited to, immunization records or other documentation

*(cf. 5111.1 - District Residency)*

*(cf. 5141.26 - Tuberculosis Testing)*

*(cf. 5141.31 - Immunizations)*

*(cf. 5141.32 - Health Screening for School Entry)*

If the foster youth or a person with the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth disagrees with the liaison's enrollment recommendation, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make a determination within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision, the parent/guardian or foster youth may appeal that decision to the Board. The Board shall consider the issue at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board's decision shall be final.

*(cf. 9320 - Meetings and Notices)*

If any dispute arises regarding the request of a foster youth to remain in the school of origin, the youth has the right to remain in the school of origin pending resolution of the dispute. (Education Code 48853.5)

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### **Transportation**

Upon request, the district shall provide transportation for a foster youth to and from his/her school of origin when the student is residing within or without the district and the school of origin is within district boundaries.

*(cf. 3540 - Transportation)*

*(cf. 3541 - Transportation Routes and Services)*

### **Effect of Absences on Grades**

The grades of a student in foster care shall not be lowered for any absence from school that is due to either of the following circumstances: (Education Code 49069.5)

1. A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the student's grades shall be calculated as of the date he/she left school
2. A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity

*(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)*

### **Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities**

A foster youth whose residence changes pursuant to a court order or decision of a child welfare worker shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in other extracurricular activities. (Education Code 48850)

*(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)*

*(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)*

### **Notification and Complaints**

Information regarding the educational rights of foster youth shall be included in the annual uniform complaint procedures notification distributed to students, parents/guardians, employees, and other interested parties pursuant to 5 CCR 4622. (Education Code 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1, 51225.2)

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

Any complaint that the district has not complied with requirements regarding the education of foster youth may be filed in accordance with the district's procedures in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. If the district finds merit in a complaint, the district shall provide a remedy

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to the affected student. A complainant not satisfied with the district's decision may appeal the decision to the California Department of Education (CDE) and shall receive a written decision regarding the appeal within 60 days of CDE's receipt of the appeal. If the CDE finds merit in an appeal, the district shall provide a remedy to the affected student. (Education Code 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1, 51225.2)

*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*

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**SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Santa Clarita, California